

CLAIMS

1. A storage compartment comprising a container defining an access aperture closable by a closure that can be sealed to the container around the aperture and that can be opened by relative movement between the container and the closure in a lateral direction with respect to the aperture, the container having a first sealing loop around the aperture and the closure having a second sealing loop co-operable by alignment with the first sealing loop to maintain a seal when the closure closes the aperture, wherein the sealing loops are moved into and out of mutual alignment by said relative movement between the container and the closure and wherein at least one of the sealing loops includes magnetic means for attracting the other of the sealing loops to maintain a seal when the sealing loops are mutually aligned.
2. The compartment of Claim 1, wherein the relative movement between the container and the closure causes sliding contact between the sealing loops.
3. The compartment of Claim 1 or Claim 2, wherein the sealing loops are substantially planar.
4. The compartment of Claim 3, wherein a minor portion of a sealing loop is out of the plane of the remainder of the loop.
5. The compartment of Claim 3 or Claim 4, wherein the sealing loops move in substantially parallel planes.
6. The compartment of any of Claims 3 to 5, wherein the sealing loops are substantially coplanar.
7. The compartment of any preceding Claim, wherein the sealing loops comprise sections transverse to the direction of movement and sections aligned with the direction of movement.
8. The compartment of Claim 7, wherein the sections are substantially straight.

9. The compartment of Claim 8, wherein the sealing loops are generally rectangular and define front and rear sections and two side sections connected successively by corners.

10. The compartment of any preceding Claim, wherein the sealing loops are continuous.

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11. The compartment of any preceding Claim, wherein both sealing loops include magnetic means.

10 12. The compartment of any of Claims 1 to 10, wherein one of the sealing loops includes magnetic means and the other of the sealing loops includes material that can be attracted to the magnetic means.

13. The compartment of any preceding Claim, wherein at least one of the sealing loops comprises a resiliently flexible seal.

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14. The compartment of Claim 13, wherein the seal is an elongate member defining generally parallel ridges separated by a web wherein the ridges maintain clearance between the web and a cooperating sealing surface in use.

20 15. The compartment of Claim 14, wherein a magnetic or magnetically attractive strip extends along the web to press the ridges into sealing contact with the cooperating sealing surface in use.

25 16. The compartment of any of Claims 13 to 15, wherein the resiliently flexible seal includes means for magnetic attraction to the other sealing loop and biases said means away from the other sealing loop, said bias being overcome in use by increasing magnetic attraction to effect a seal.

30 17. The compartment of Claim 16, wherein alignment of the sealing loops increases magnetic attraction to overcome the bias and effect a seal in use.

18. The compartment of any preceding Claim and including anti-magnetic flux means associated with the magnetic means of a sealing loop.

19. The compartment of any preceding Claim, further comprising a trace heater associated with at least one of the sealing loops.

20. The compartment of Claim 19, wherein at least one of the sealing loops comprises a
5 resiliently flexible seal and wherein the trace heater applies heat directly to that seal.

21. The compartment of Claim 20, wherein the trace heater is within the seal.

22. The compartment of Claim 20 or Claim 21, wherein the trace heater applies heat to an
10 outboard side of the seal.

23. The compartment of any preceding Claim, wherein at least one of the sealing loops
comprises a resiliently flexible seal and wherein the seal is mounted to a removable
relatively rigid frame that can be fixed to the container or to the closure.

15 24. The compartment of any preceding Claim, further comprising an insulating barrier
inboard of at least one of the sealing loops.

25. The compartment of Claim 24, wherein the insulating barrier is configured to maintain
20 substantially all of the associated sealing loop above zero Celsius when the container is
used for frozen storage.

26. The compartment of any preceding Claim, wherein the sealing loops are rectangular
and wherein the container or the closure are substantially rectangular and have rounded
25 bulbous corners.

27. A storage compartment, substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to or as
illustrated in any of the accompanying drawings.